

## Bachelors Grove & Paranormal Activity

Since as far back as the 1950s stories have circulated about paranormal activity taking place at Bachelors Grove cemetery and its immediate area. After well over five decades many of these tales have now become common knowledge among the local communities

But what are these tales that the locals speak of and are there any facts to support them? If so, how did they begin and where does it all stand today? Given the nature of paranormal phenomena there may never be a definitive answer to all of the tales.



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Information provided by this guide may be updated and added to at any given time and may not necessarily provide all of the information you may have heard about Bachelors Grove cemetery.

For further information about paranormal matters concerning Bachelors Grove cemetery please visit the main [YouTube Channel](#)

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## Blue Light

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The following was written by Pete Crapia, founder of the Bachelors Grove Cemetery & Settlement Research Center. A great appreciation goes out to all of those that have and continue to contribute to the research efforts!

The origin of the blue light legend is often said as having come from a sighting that took place in 1970 by Jack Hermanski of Illinois. He described a blue light from within the cemetery that grew as large as a basketball, blinked in ten- to twenty-second intervals, and rapidly changed positions. He had also reported the light on at least two different occasions.

A Southtown Economist newspaper article from 1990 quoted researcher Richard Crowe of Illinois as saying, "In the 1960s, there were reports of a blue ghost light there." Given the long-term research efforts by Crowe this would clearly indicate that a blue light had been reported prior to 1970.

Sightings have placed the light moving up and down the old Midlothian Turnpike south of the cemetery as well as moving among the headstones. On rare occasions the light has been accused of pushing people to the ground even though there have been no clear indications of any up-close physical contact. Various references describe the light as being about the size of a softball, pool ball, and a small basketball as well.

Legend has it that the light often appears on clear moonlit nights, though it has also been reported to appear during daylight hours. The only commonality to the sightings, short of it being the color blue, is that it has an apparent intelligence to it. Besides the extreme case of being chased, one indication of intelligence includes the light continuously fading from view when witnesses approach it, then a moment later it will reappear behind them.

According to an audio transcript of a speech given by a local school teacher, there is supposed to have been an incident in 1963 about three young boys lost in the woods in the vicinity of the cemetery that was printed in the newspapers. When the boys were initially found by police on 143rd Street after being lost for a couple of weeks, all three of them could only speak about a "blue light" and nothing else. Within that same time period five young men witnessed a blue light from within the forest adjacent to the cemetery.

At approximately 2:00 A.M. during late Fall of 1963, all five men were standing on the north end of the pond next to the now defunct [car pull-off](#) when the light traveled over the water toward them. Out of fear, they all ran back to their car and were chased by it as they drove away on 143rd Street.



Defunct Car Pull-Off - May 13, 1979

While the driver was turning his head to get another look at the light, they wound up sliding off the road into a cornfield which resulted in stalling the engine. After a moment of silence among the men, the light reappeared hovering over the front right-hand side of the car. The light proceeded to hover three times around the car, continued over the same cornfield where all the men were watching, then crossed over 143rd Street and drifted off into the forest. It was described as being transparent and about the size of a basketball.

Although the exact direction of travel, as well as the specific cornfield is unknown, among the five men that witnessed the light was the school teacher himself. It is said that he was told to

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stop giving his speech in school but it is hoped that one day, possibly during retirement, that he will come forward with additional information. Any students of his that wish to share their experience of his speech are welcome to respond as well.

Some time during the 1970s Deanna Vaught of Illinois witnessed a "blue light in the trees" while driving with her father. The father could not give an explanation for the light but later on in high school Vaught learned that a blue light had been reported within the trees in the same area. The road they were traveling on was not mentioned, but it was in close proximity to the cemetery.

In 1971 Denise Travis of Illinois reported to Richard Crowe that she was able to pass her hand through a blue light but felt no change in temperature or anything else out of the ordinary. Prior to 2022, Denise was the only person to come forward claiming to physically interact with any ghost light associated with Bachelors Grove cemetery. On April 03, 2022, a [white light was felt](#) as it hovered above the shoulder of Pete Crapia [after an interview](#) with Charles (private) who also witnessed the encounter. The event took place near the creek adjacent to the northwest corner of the cemetery.

One reference worth noting is a confusing statement in the 1994 book Haunted Places: The National Directory. On page 155 it states that in 1971 a woman was able to "put her hand right through the ghost of a figure down a path in the cemetery." The quote is strongly believed to be in reference to the same woman passing her hand through the blue light.

A more serious statement to consider is a reference to the same woman in 1971 within an article from the National Examiner in 1984. Within the article it states, "A teenager who had a brush with the sinister light a few years ago put her hand through it, she and her companions later insisted." This would indicate that more than two people were present. But an interview with Crowe in 2011 indicates she was accompanied by only one other person, possibly her sister, who also witnessed the event.

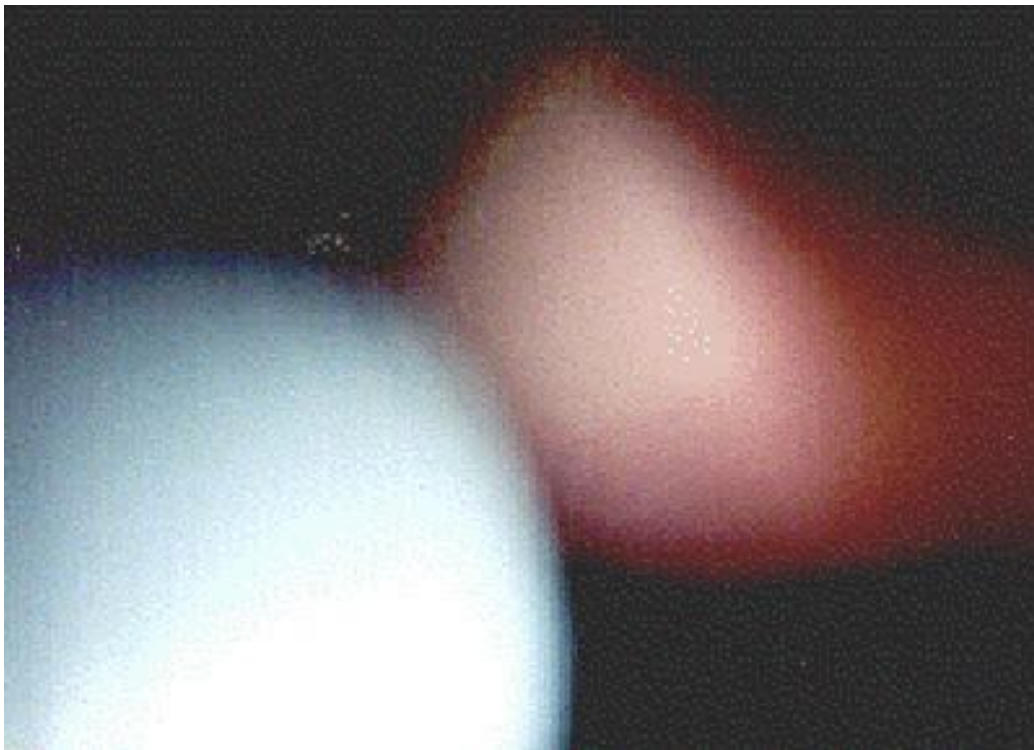
Larry Borkstrom of Illinois [recalled his first time](#) visiting Bachelors Grove cemetery in the Spring of 1986. Toward the end of his visit just before sunset, two balls of light appeared one foot above the ground and five feet in front of him while walking inside the cemetery. They initially glowed a mixture of white and blue and proceeded to slowly move toward the south side entrance. As they traveled toward the entrance both lights shifted to the color red. Three teenagers standing outside the entrance watched in silence as the lights "danced" around them. During this two to three minute encounter the lights alternated in a blue and red fashion. As the lights headed back toward Borkstrom they returned to a white and blue color. When the teenagers proceeded to enter the cemetery both lights returned back to the entrance in a "solid red" color. The teenagers ran away and as Borkstrom approached the entrance both lights simply faded from view. At no point did the lights leave the fenced perimeter of the cemetery.

Some time during that same year of 1986, police and a dive team were summoned to the pond adjacent to Bachelors Grove cemetery due to reports of motorists in the water. During their search for anyone in the water the flood light generator placed on 143rd Street malfunctioned



and lost power. The dive team then proceeded to use hand held search lights as they moved toward a bubbling noise using a small boat. When they approached the area of interest all portable lights lost power while the air became extremely cold and a "greenish" ball of light "shot" out of the water without making a splash. As the light traveled through the cemetery it ascended into the trees. When it reached the entrance to the cemetery the color shifted to blue and it disappeared into the top of the trees. Police on the scene made a decision to cover up the event by stating nothing was found but a member of the emergency dive team [leaked details](#) of the event. Police were questioned about the event many years later and confirmed the use of a dive team with a malfunctioning flood light event taking place once at the pond. The officer that was willing to speak was quickly told to be quiet by another officer and the subject matter was terminated.

Possibly related to the 1986 description reported by Larry Borkstrom is a photograph of a white and blue light, which also includes a white and red light leaving a tail of red behind it. Borkstrom was asked if the photograph resembled the blue and red lights he witnessed in which he replied "close, but it was years ago, I'd say almost." At one time this particular [photograph](#) shown to him was released by Stacy McArdle at her now defunct website of [hauntedpages.com](#). It is unclear as to the exact date it was captured, possibly in the very late 1990s, but it was labeled as capturing both a blue and red source of light within the cemetery. McArdle is known for identifying an unrelated hoaxed paranormal [photograph](#) of Bachelors Grove cemetery and convincing the perpetrator into admitting it. Based upon this statement of credibility it is up to the reader to decide if this photograph represents the same, or alternative, blue light reported by eyewitnesses.



White/Blue and White/Red Lights - Courtesy of Stacy McArdle

In 1987 Ted Visnec of Illinois spoke of an experience with a blue light during a [WLS television broadcast](#) in Chicago. He spoke of himself and his associates all witnessing a "deep blue light" over the old Midlothian Turnpike south of the cemetery. They first saw it on the western end of the road adjacent to the southwest corner of the fence to the cemetery. It then proceeded to go "up and down the path" and came near the main entrance to the cemetery on the south end. While he was standing near the main entrance he "thought somebody pushed me, cause I went flying. I got knocked, you know, on my face." It is unclear as to the exact year in which the sighting took place but it is believed to have been in the early 1970s, most likely 1973.

During what may be the peak to the blue light sightings occurring throughout the 1970s, Richard Crowe conducted an interview with police officers from the Cook County Sheriff's Department who also claimed to have witnessed the blue light phenomenon. Occasionally the police themselves are questioned as being the source of the light due to the rotating lights on top of their car. The problem is that the departments patrolling the area are said to have only been issued red lights during the 1970s, but further research is required. There is a distinct difference, however, between watching a blue light and being chased by one.

Today, you can even find a fair number of police officers, many of them employed within the Cook County Sheriff's Department, that will discuss stories handed down as fact by other, often veteran, officers. The majority of the stories happen to be about strange lights and it is said that some officers even refused to investigate them out of fear that they had nothing to do with people based on their characteristics. Other stories happen to be about murders that had taken place in very close proximity to the cemetery. According to the audio transcript mentioned above, some officers have even chased the light only to have it escape them and disappear into the woods.

Taking place during approximately 2008 or 2009, Britney (private) [came forward](#) with an experience of a blue ball of light that first appeared from behind a fallen tree. During a night time visit to the cemetery, she and her best friend watched as the ball of light performed an up and down swimming motion for around five seconds and also had a bright white quality to it as well. The light was about the size of a ladies softball and was less than five feet in front of them near the Shields family burial plot on the north side of the cemetery. Although the light was bright, it was also described as being confined and did not illuminate the area around it as it disappeared behind the same fallen tree from where it emerged from.

During a late night drive some time around 2000 or 2002, Matt (private) [described](#) a blue light encounter while driving east on 143rd Street. As he was approaching the bridge next to the pond near the cemetery, a bright blue light "flashed" on the south side. The light had no discernible size or shape but was bright enough to illuminate the area for hundreds of feet on the southern end of the street near the pond. The illumination lasted for approximately two or three seconds after the flash had occurred and he continued driving east and left the area.

Witnessing the blue light had reportedly gone into a decline around the late 1970s, but it is still unclear as to when the phenomenon was first reported. Reports of the blue light continue to this day but are very rare, typically contain very few details, and the encounter is usually said as being brief. Current research efforts into recovering newspaper articles to substantiate claims of the missing boys in 1963 have not been successful. There is, however, testimony from multiple sources to support that newspaper articles do exist and the research continues.

In 1974 Richard Crowe was quoted in the Chicago Tribune as saying the light "moves thru the swampy area onto higher ground through the trees." which is much like the experience of the school teacher in 1963. He also stated, "I have about a hundred independent reports, many of them on tape." Those reports happen to be the origin to why the cemetery is often said to have "over a hundred reported sightings." Though it is unclear in the article if all of those reports are only in relation to the blue light or other encounters, further research indicates they are a general collection of various types of encounters. Found within an obscure 2000 newsletter called the Phantasmic News, a woman and her boyfriend published their personal experience of a "glowing blue orb of light" over the pond. It was later understood that the sighting took place in March but it is still uncertain if it occurred in 1999 or 2000.

The sighting became more well known to the public after a Fox paranormal television series in 2000. Most of the footage was then recycled for an episode in 2008 aired by the Sci-Fi network. A young woman unrelated to their sighting was included on both programs and was also quoted in The Star newspaper in 2000 as saying, "They were like two blue orbs floating through the woods." The article goes on to mention that the woman was able to film the lights with an ordinary camcorder.

Whatever happened to the video footage of the blue lights is unknown. Unfortunately, the 2000 Fox footage is unavailable at this time for full review and there was no mention of it in the 2008 Sci-Fi episode. There was also no clear indication of photographs of a blue light from March, though a single unidentified photograph was briefly shown showing a "blue circle" within the cemetery.

In more recent times the legend of the two-headed monster for Bachelors Grove cemetery has been found to include similarities with blue light sightings. Within the 1998 book *The Field Guide to North American Hauntings* by W. Haden Blackman, on page 72 it states, "The grotesque creature wanders between the headstones, often accompanied by a legion of small, dancing blue lights." This same book also happens to be the origin of the blue lights being associated with the two-headed monster. According to Richard Crowe, however, the overall story of a two-headed monster has no true relationship with the cemetery.

## Caretaker

(Also known as the Murdering Caretaker and One-Armed Sniper)

Last updated January 25, 2023

The following was written by Pete Crapia, founder of the Bachelors Grove Cemetery & Settlement Research Center. A great appreciation goes out to all of those that have and continue to contribute to the research efforts!

The legend of the Caretaker has been found to include many variations. The most common story speaks of a house located near the cemetery which is supposed to have been the home of the caretaker. Other, more modern "caretaker" encounters, come with a twist that you might not be expecting.

The house is said to be located a short distance west of what is now the roped-off entrance to the main path leading to the cemetery off of 143rd Street, across from the Rubio Woods Forest Preserve parking lot. This path is also known as a portion of the Midlothian Turnpike that was unofficially closed to vehicle traffic in the 1960s, with the official closure occurring in 1977.

Legend has it that the caretaker went crazy and murdered his family. There are variations to the story and that includes how they were killed. Afterwards, the caretaker is said to have taken his own life inside of the house, in which his death was also carried out in different ways, but ultimately the house was burned down with all of them inside of it.

The above legend is generally the most common version repeated but the earliest caretaker stories involve visitors to the cemetery running into the caretaker himself. During these incidents it is said that the caretaker would tell you to leave the area, while at times carrying an oil lantern in his hand, and would also be carrying a shotgun from time to time. The reports of shotgun and lantern stories possibly date back to the 1960s with more widespread coverage through radio broadcasts in the 1970s by researcher Richard Crowe of Illinois.

One version of these earlier stories can be found within an audio transcript of a speech given by a local school teacher. It speaks of an event that is supposed to have occurred sometime around 1971 between late November and early December.

He describes two male college students who park on the once popular, but now defunct, 143rd Street [pull-off](#) next to the pond near the cemetery. They proceeded to walk south on the narrow path between the pond and creek and came upon a man in his early to mid seventies walking toward them. The elderly man is described as carrying a clear globe lantern emanating a "yellow-orange" light and begins to yell at the two students as he gets closer.

The students eventually calm the man and let him know that they are visiting due to the stories of the blue light and disappearing house. Becoming agitated once again, he states that the blue



light does not exist. He continues to tell them that the house is very much real and that it is the caretaker's house, in which he also mentions that he is the caretaker.

The old man ends up telling them to go see the house for themselves and follows behind them on a path going toward it. While on the path the light from the lantern goes out and both students turn around to find that the man has disappeared. There was no mention as to if they found the house or which path was used.

The Caretaker legend shares a similar detail with that of the Hooked Spirit legend. Once in a while people will give reference to a hooked hand man, with a shotgun, who used to live in the area. Such a tale can be found within the 1989 book *True Tales of the Unknown: The Uninvited*. On page 52 it states, "He is sometimes reported to be carrying a double-barreled shotgun and chases these lovers from the property which once belonged to him." The Hooked Spirit legend, which can also have small variations in itself, is generally considered an Urban Legend and that there are no facts to support it.

The earliest written record found of the tale thus far as it relates to Bachelors Grove cemetery goes back to 1975 within *The Herald* newspaper in Illinois. The article briefly states, "Hair-raising stories about a mysterious one-armed sniper," while speaking about other various stories associated with Bachelors Grove cemetery. Today, when visiting the cemetery you can even come across "old-timers" that still give reference to a "one-armed sniper."

In more modern times, the legend of the caretaker and his murders has become more popular due to the 2003 book *Creepy Chicago*. It goes on to speculate that the disappearing house near Bachelors Grove cemetery may be the same house that the caretaker lived in. There are even a few long-time visitors to the area who claim that they remember a similar "bloody" caretaker story told to them by police officers in the late 1970s.

Regardless of where the murdering Caretaker legends had originated from there is still no evidence to substantiate them. In fact, Bachelors Grove cemetery did not have a specific caretaker as it was more of a collective effort in maintaining the grounds by family members such as Clarence Fulton. During an interview with Richard Crowe in 2011, he also mentions that the tale of any caretaker is unfounded since the cemetery did not have one assigned to it.

Also in more modern times is a tale that the caretaker house was the "Blue House" that stands next to the cellular telephone towers directly across from the Rubio Woods Forest Preserve parking lot. Contrary to this spin on the Caretaker legend, the blue house was originally located somewhere within the Goeselville settlement which was near the intersection of what is now called 147th Street and Oak Park Avenue.

This would not locate the house close to the cemetery as legend usually states. Amazingly, according to historians, the house was later relocated from the old settlement and placed on the property where it stands today. Within an aerial photograph from 1938 you can verify that the

house was not even on the property yet. This also contradicts the common legend because it was never burned down, nor had it ever been burned down and rebuilt.

During 2005 a statement was made from one of the current owners that the house was once used as the caretaker's home. At present, there is no information to substantiate the claim. On the contrary, some time during 2016 or 2017 one of the owners presented legal paperwork concerning the purchase of the house and inquired about the real location where the house may have once originally stood. This was due to them being curious as to why the basement foundation and its walls were made of more recent material than the house itself.

A more serious matter to consider when it comes to using the term "caretaker" and the topic of the paranormal is the more modern events that surround the appearance and disappearance of a local resident that likes to call himself the caretaker.

His first public [appearance on video](#) goes back to a 2009 YouTube video where he goes by the alias Andy Cump, which was supposed to be "Gump" and not Cump. Visitors to the cemetery throughout the years now know him by his real name of "Rick" or "Richie" due to being unhappy with the alias. Some time around 2014 he decided to tell everyone that he was the "caretaker" and it became the most popular nickname for him.

Rick "The Caretaker" enjoys telling tales of being a child that used to live in the "blue house" next to the cellular telephone towers. Even though the story is not true, given some of the history that surrounds the blue house, and the tales of a caretaker that became attached to it, some people feel his personal story is real.

What becomes more fantastic is not the stories he loves to make up, but the reports by visitors to the cemetery going back shortly before the 2009 YouTube video. Visitors would report that they would be speaking with Rick, and a moment later he would be gone. Some reports would describe directly speaking with him, turning their backs for a few seconds, and he would be nowhere in sight when they turned back around. At other times people would describe seeing him in the general area, but seconds later he is somewhere else much further away making witnesses feel that something is very wrong about the situation.

These reports went unpublished as they were collected by the Bachelors Grove Cemetery & Settlement Research Center through casual on-site conversations. In fact, it was assumed that people were making mistakes since Rick can be a very fast walker and frequently headed off into the woods to urinate.

Not long after the 2009 YouTube video was released Pete Crapia finally revealed to Rick that he was being called a "ghost" by some of the visitors. He was unaware of the stories about him being reported as "disappearing" but he quickly and happily adopted the "ghost of Bachelors Grove" term for himself long before taking on the "caretaker" nickname.

Rick found the reports of being a “ghost” very entertaining and not at all true. According to Rick, he feels that all information pertaining to the paranormal is humorous and cannot be taken seriously. On occasion he would happily state that he makes up stories for visitors to the cemetery whether it sounded paranormal or not.

As the years progressed Rick would keep telling everyone that he is a ghost, and the reports of him appearing and disappearing continued. The reports would roughly happen in three to six month intervals, and it was still assumed that people were making simple mistakes. Eventually “groups” of people, as opposed to a single person or two, started claiming he was appearing and disappearing which created suspicion as to the possibility of paranormal encounters actually occurring.

One such group sighting took place around August or September of 2018 when approximately four to six young adults were standing at the eastern edge of the old Midlothian Turnpike near the creek on the southwest side of the cemetery. The group of people appeared to be confused with some of them having heightened anxiety. They were questioned by Pete Crapia as to what happened since it was very apparent that “something” was upsetting them. All but one person in the group claimed to have been watching someone across the creek walking on a path and right before their eyes the man had disappeared.

The general report was that when they turned around the same person who disappeared was now inside of the cemetery itself. They found it not only impossible, but most kept repeating that he disappeared right in front of their eyes. The one person who did not witness any man at all, let alone disappearing, assumed his friends were either crazy or playing a prank and shrugged off the situation.

When asked as to what the person looked like they described the classic clothing that Rick “The Caretaker” typically enjoys wearing when he visits the cemetery. When it was expressed that they probably made a mistake, and that it is common for Rick to walk away fast, one person became very agitated and scoffed at the explanation. They waved their hand at Pete as if to say “get lost” and kept repeating to his friends that “He doesn’t get it. Forget him. He just doesn’t get it.” Pete was a little disturbed by the sincere reaction but still failed to record an interview.

Approximately two months later on October 21, 2018 Pete Crapia [was filming](#) a felled tree near the entrance of the cemetery south of the old Midlothian Turnpike. Afterwards the camera was put away and he placed his bag on the ground. After placing the bag on the ground he witnessed Rick walking up to him in the woods, presumably to say hello, then reached down to grab a cigarette from the bag. When he looked up Rick was nowhere to be seen. It was then that Rick was spotted inside of the cemetery speaking with other people.

Rick was immediately questioned as to if he was just in the woods and Pete received strange looks from both Rick and those he was speaking with at the time. They all vouched that Rick was with them for many minutes and based upon the distance from where he disappeared it

would have been physically impossible to have traveled the distance without being seen. Video evidence also proved that he was inside of the cemetery before the encounter in the woods.

About one month prior to witnessing Rick appearing and disappearing in the woods near the felled tree an encounter occurred where Pete Crapia [was witnessed](#) walking east down the old Midlothian Turnpike presumably heading to the Rubio Woods parking lot. He apparently said hello to a man and woman heading west toward the cemetery, but upon them arriving at the cemetery entrance Pete was already inside and engaged in discussion with other people.

The couple initially thought that Pete ran down the rest of the main trail, then along 143rd Street, traveled through the woods, hopped the cemetery fence, and was waiting for them as a joke. Still in disbelief, they approached Pete and confirmed to themselves that the man on the path not only looked “exactly” like Pete but that he was also carrying the same unique looking military bag that was slung upon his shoulder.

The people who were in discussion with Pete at that time also told the couple that they were all speaking together for a while. The couple later became convinced that it was physically impossible to be a joke being played upon them since it would take much longer to run around and he was not out of breath or sweating upon their arrival. But that did not stop them from repeatedly asking if a joke was being played upon them during the rest of their visit to the cemetery.

Apparently, witnessing someone very much alive appearing and disappearing like a dead person’s ghost is not a new phenomenon in the area. On October 27, 2018 Monica (private) [came forward](#) with a 2004 story of her mother and godmother collectively having an encounter with an elderly man on the old Midlothian Turnpike as they walked west toward the cemetery. The man acknowledged them as he passed by heading east on the old road, but upon arriving at the main entrance the same man was already inside the perimeter of the cemetery.

In April of 2020 Cassie Scalise of Illinois [recalled the experience](#) she had of her own friend witnessing Cassie appearing to her friend when Cassie was really someplace else. Although the exact year in which the event took place is unknown, the encounter itself took place in the woods southeast of 147th and Oak Park Avenue. When they both reached an area of the woods where they planned to relax and have a small fire, Cassie returned to the car to retrieve the cigarette lighter they forgot to bring along. Her friend stayed behind but upon Cassie returning her friend was too unsettled to stick around for the fire. She told Cassie that she saw “Cassie” waving and calling to her from roughly fifty feet away, wearing different clothes than she originally had on that day (but Cassie was known to have owned the outfit her friend witnessed), and was spotted from a different direction from where the car was parked and where Cassie left the area.

One observation made during the Rick “The Caretaker” disappearance from October 21, 2018 may provide possible clues to understanding the phenomena. Within the video that was released it was purposely omitted that before setting down the bag Rick was briefly witnessed

on the old Midlothian Turnpike heading east. The issue was that Rick appeared to be half as tall as he should have been. Pete rubbed his eyes thinking it was a strange optical illusion. But upon taking another look Rick could not be seen on the old road. It was not until the bag was to be set down that Rick was witnessed walking up on Pete in the woods looking very solid and normal. This sudden appearance by Rick in the woods distracted from the initial sighting of him on the old road.

Why was this detail hidden from the general public and how may it provide a clue to what may be going on? The short answer is that it was an investigative technique to avoid any false reports. It would be important not to fake this detail because the observation of him being smaller sounds extremely familiar to the disappearing house effect in which some witnesses claim that they see the house get smaller, or in some descriptions the house “shrinks” as it fades away from view. How true are the stories of a “shrinking” effect with the [phantom house](#) reports? Perhaps it is a real phenomenon.



## **Disappearing House**

(Also known as the Phantom Farm House and Magic House)

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The following was written by Pete Crapia, founder of the Bachelors Grove Cemetery & Settlement Research Center. A great appreciation goes out to all of those that have and continue to contribute to the research efforts!

The legend of the disappearing house is the most popular story told. The most common description is a small white two-story house with a porch. It has also been described as 1850s to 1890s vintage and Victorian-style. Other common descriptions include a light shining through a window on the second floor, a swing hanging over the porch, wooden pillars near the porch, as well as a small picket fence close by. Initial sightings of the house are likely to have originated as far back as the mid 1950s with early 1960s reports being prevalent.

The nature of why it is called the disappearing house has variations. One common report is that the house, which usually appears very solid and real, is visible on one visit but upon follow-up visits it is nowhere to be found. Another common report is witnessing a house out near the cemetery but later the witness hears that no house is known to exist in the area. A portion of those witnesses who later hear that no house exists, however, do not return to look for it out of fear and other various reasons.

As far as the last two commonalities are concerned, it is plausible that the time period reflects a visitation just before one of the original settlers' homes was completely torn down after being acquired by the Forest Preserve District. There are, however, aerial photographs from the 1950s which suggest that it could have been difficult to see any real houses west of the cemetery due to vegetation growth if only visiting the cemetery itself. Further research is required as to when they may have been demolished. Official records retained by the Forest Preserve District of Cook County for each parcel of land obtained do not appear to ever contain notations as to the removal of structures. Historically, structures would either be bulldozed or safely burned on-site and any "official" records may never have existed in the first place. Evidence of burning has been found for at least one old home southwest of the cemetery.

In other accounts witnesses experience a transparent-like image of the house. This can vary from the entire house looking transparent to one of the windows appearing odd in some fashion. The light which emanates from the window has been said to flicker like a flame while giving off a "yellow-orange" color. Occasionally witnesses report the house as "shrinking" when they approach it and it eventually disappears from their view.

According to some of the earliest researchers the house is usually described in the same fashion no matter where it is seen. Some reports locate it off of the old Midlothian Turnpike near the south and southwest ends of the cemetery, as well as on the west side of Tinley Creek near

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the west and northwest area adjacent to the cemetery. Rare reports even place the house within the cemetery itself and just outside the main entrance on the south end. Overall, it has been reported on both sides of the old Midlothian Turnpike in close proximity to the cemetery.

A 1974 quote from researcher Richard Crowe in Illinois within the Chicago Tribune states, "At night, people see an old one-story frame house-it's been spotted on both sides of the dirt road as you enter the cemetery." An eyewitness had also come forward for Crowe's 1985 documentary *The Ghosts of Chicago* stating it was one-story. These are the only verifiable references thus far stating that it was one-story high, as opposed to the usual report of two-story.

Some of the earliest known material that documents where the house is reported to appear at, as well as detailed descriptions of it, is in the possession of Richard Crowe. The material includes a hand-drawn map of the general area with markings indicating different sections around the cemetery where it has been sighted.

Dale Kaczmarek of the Ghost Research Society in Oak Lawn, Illinois is also said to have a similar map of the area. Within the 2000 book *Beyond The Grave* it mentions Kaczmarek as having interviewed dozens of individuals that have witnessed paranormal activity at the cemetery where many of them have contributed to the map.

None of the hand-drawn maps by either party have ever been made available for viewing to the general public, or to the Bachelors Grove Cemetery & Settlement Research Center. Unfortunately, Richard Crowe passed away before he could follow through with his plans to share the map in 2011 and help compare it to official property records. Any map created by Dale Kaczmarek was considered lost and would probably never be located for further study.

There are also various sketches of the house. Within the 1985 documentary *The Ghosts of Chicago*, Richard Crowe includes two eyewitnesses each presenting their own hand-drawn sketches. These [sketches](#) are the only known publicly released images which represent the disappearing house by eyewitnesses.



Hand Drawn Sketches - Courtesy of Richard Crowe

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In more recent years a [photograph](#) was released of a real house that existed a short distance east of the cemetery which was captured in the 1890s. The photograph, which was provided by ancestors of the Schmidt family who used to own the property surrounding the cemetery, does not fit the common detailed descriptions of the disappearing house as questioned by some researchers.



1890s Schmidt Residence - Courtesy of the Schmidt Family

An additional [photograph](#) from 1914, later discovered and sent in by the same family, interestingly comes closer to the descriptions such as a porch, pillars and a small picket fence in the background. This house was also located a short distance east of the cemetery. As of October of 2011, official Plat of Survey maps concerning property transactions have led to the discovery of additional structures surrounding the cemetery. The maps and other documentation contain specific details as to barns, houses, silos, sheds, etc,. It appears that many more homes existed near the cemetery. The records also indicate details about the house within the 1914 photograph including how many bedrooms, wells, hen house, hog house, etc,. More time is required to analyze over a hundred of the recently discovered documents.



1914 Schmidt Residence - Courtesy of the Schmidt Family

During a 1987 [WLS television broadcast](#), Ted Visnec of Illinois spoke of his own experience with a "farm-style" house. In the interview he points and walks toward the direction of where he and his associates all saw the house, which would be within the northwest area adjacent to the cemetery.

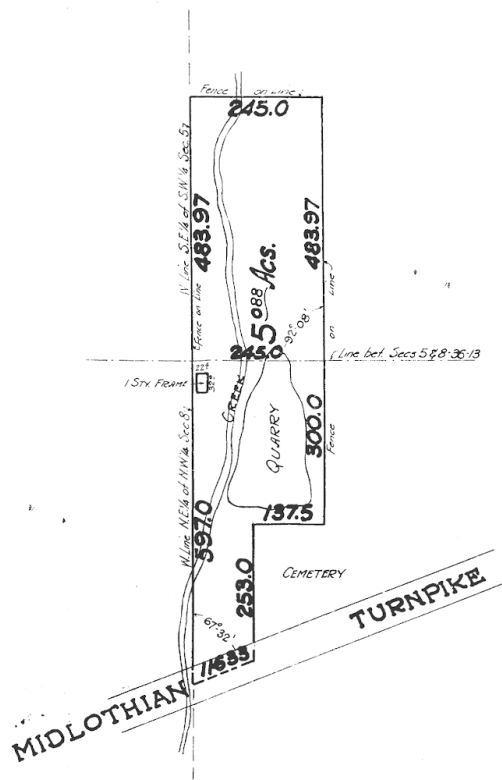
One interesting document that may relate to the sighting is a [Plat of Survey map](#) created on March 12, 1928 which was recently discovered in 2011. Within the map it indicates a one story frame house 22 x 32 feet in diameter, once owned by Christ Boehm, located in the direction of where Visnec was walking and pointing toward in the broadcast. Further documents are being recovered about the property which may reveal why no physical signs of the house exist such as concrete foundations.



# Forest Preserve District of Cook County

## PLAT of SURVEY

Of that part of the N.E. 1/4 of the N.W. 1/4 of Sec. 8 and the S.E. 1/4 of the S.W. 1/4 of Sec. 5, all in T. 36 N., R. 13. E. of the 3<sup>rd</sup> P.M. described as follows: Commencing at the NW corner of the N.E. 1/4 of the N.W. 1/4 of said Sec. 8, thence E. along the N. line of said N.E. 1/4 of the N.W. 1/4 245.0 ft. thence South parallel with W. line of said N.E. 1/4 of N.W. 1/4 to the N. line of cemetery; thence W. along N. line of cemetery to the N.W. corner thereof; thence S. along W. line of cemetery to the center of public highway; thence S.W. 1/4 along the center of highway to the W. line of said N.E. 1/4 of N.W. 1/4; thence N. along the W. line of said N.E. 1/4 of N.W. 1/4 to the place of beginning; Also beginning at the S.W. corner of the S.E. 1/4 of S.W. 1/4 of said Sec. 5, thence North along the N. line of said S.E. 1/4 of S.W. 1/4, 483.97 ft. thence E. parallel with S. line of said S.E. 1/4 of S.W. 1/4 245.0 ft. thence S. parallel with W. line of said S.E. 1/4 of S.W. 1/4 483.97 ft. to the S. line thereof, thence W. along the S. line, 245.0 ft. to the place of beginning.



Scale 1" = 150'  
District BREMEN  
Bought From CHRIST BOEHM, CONDEMN.  
Book 40 Page 111  
Drawn by E. Puccia  
Checked by  
Approved Geo C. Matman  
Surveyor

STATE OF ILLINOIS,  
COUNTY OF COOK

THE FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT of Cook County hereby certifies that it has surveyed the property described above, and that the plat above drawn is a correct representation of said survey.

Chicago, MARCH 12 A. D. 1928

E. J. C. Chief Engineer

4811 497

Christ Boehm - 1928 Plat of Survey - One Story 22' X 32' Home Location

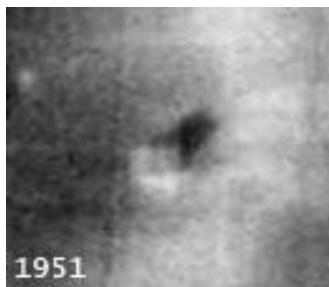


During the broadcast Visnic stated, "It had to be about 1973 it was like, when we saw that, we were walking off there with me and some of my friends and we saw the house, you know like that. It was like during the day which was like strange cause you'd think you'd see it, you know, at night time or somethin." He also added, "The house looked like, like a farm-style house, you know like a, one, you know like one big building, you know like that, it wasn't like a new modern building or anything like that"

According to an audio transcript of a speech given by a school teacher, in approximately 1969 there is supposed to have been a newspaper article describing three high school girls as witnesses to a disappearing house.

It is said that after parking on the now defunct 143rd Street [pull-off](#) next to the pond near the cemetery, they proceeded to walk south on the narrow path between the pond and creek. As they approached the area between the creek and the western side of the fence to the cemetery, there was an old house in front of them with a light shining through the window. They stated it did not appear to be lit by electricity but by some kind of flickering flame. As they walked toward it each of them felt that the house was like a mirage, it was as if the closer they got to it the further it appeared to them.

The girls eventually left the area out of fear and headed directly to the Midlothian police station. After telling police what they saw, officers instructed them to sketch the house on paper. All three drew the same description and it is also said that other witnesses had come forward in the past sketching the same image. Whatever may have happened to these sketches is unknown.



Possibly in relation to the story is an interesting object seen a short distance directly south of the cemetery within an [aerial photograph](#) captured in 1951, which happens to be in the direction of where the story places the sighting. This same image has become the subject of debate among some researchers. The area at that time was wide open such as a prairie and could have easily been viewed from the cemetery. Whether or not it was a house or barn is something that is still left to speculation. Although the rectangle shaped object casts a type of shadow that is not uncommon for a man-made structure, no physical evidence has been discovered at the site thus far to indicate that any man-made structure had existed.

In July of 1976 three brothers decided to stop by the cemetery while on their way to a carnival. During their visit one of them made a comment about getting a sandwich from a house nearby. As two of the brothers looked in the direction of where it was located one of them stated, "I didn't see that house when we came in, maybe it's the caretaker's house?" All of them continued to walk around the area and upon leaving at 8:30 P.M. they noticed that the house was no longer there. It was not until October of that same year when they learned about reports of a disappearing house near the cemetery. There was no indication as to the exact location where the house was sighted but it was described as a small white house with a "golden light" coming from two windows.

## Bachelors Grove Cemetery & Settlement Research Center

While as a guest on a 1982 WBBM radio broadcast in Chicago, Dale Kaczmarek spoke of a woman that had brought a group of children to the cemetery. In 1965 they were all visiting the area due to hearing "that some strange things happen back there" but did not know there was a cemetery. Kaczmarek then added, "they saw this house, off to the right, about 60 to 70 yards away." He described the sighting as a "big farm house" where it began to get "smaller and smaller" , as if "shrinking" , and it went "farther and farther away." There were no details as to where they were standing at the time.

Kaczmarek mentions within his 2000 book *Windy City Ghosts* that Arlene McComb witnessed the house with a group of friends in 1975. He described all of them as watching the house as it began to shrink in size until disappearing. On page 85 he also spoke of Grace Nortman witnessing the house during the Winter of 1966/1967 and Marianne Kerbs experiencing it in 1966. It was never indicated but all of the witnesses are presumed to have been residents of Illinois.

During June of 2019, a visitor to the cemetery [recalled](#) his encounter with a disappearing house around 1992. While standing on the gravel path near the center point of the cemetery, to the west he witnessed the front facing side to a home that was partially inside the boundary of the cemetery and where the cemetery fence could no longer be seen. He described the house as "brilliant white" with an overgrowth of vegetation on each side of it. A small porch was located in the center, along with a door with glass paneling as well as two windows on the left and two windows on the right of it. To the left side of the home was some sort of arch and a shed. When the witness glanced toward his friends near the cemetery entrance and turned his attention back to the house it was gone. His friends thought he was crazy, and he was also not a believer in such things until it happened. The witness was nervous about visiting the area again after all those years but his wife was curious and they both wanted to pay respect to those at the cemetery.

An eyewitness [interview](#) conducted in July of 2021 speaks of a group of four walking down the old Midlothian Turnpike heading to Bachelors Grove cemetery during the 1970s. Located about "75 to 100 yards" from the cemetery, facing southwest into the woods from the old road is the "ridgeline to a house, and part of the roof." Since they were looking for a place to party, all of them headed straight into the woods toward the house. They kept circling the area where at least one person thought it was located but neither a foundation or any other remains could be found. Afterwards they decided to party in the cemetery as they originally intended.

In more recent times, the disappearing house effect is also said to occur a fair distance away from Bachelors Grove cemetery. An additional [interview](#) conducted in July of 2021 revealed that a disappearing house was witnessed by a group of teenage girl scouts during the late 1970s. While camping at Camp Sullivan, the group were hiking the Bigfoot Trail headed northeast and crossed Justamere Road (currently called Oak Park Avenue). As they approached Ridgeland Avenue all of them saw "a huge home, that just lit up. It looked Victorian, it was bright, it was beautiful, it was tall" As they got closer to the house it just disappeared. The eyewitness from

this group that was able to recall the events places the house near the northwest portion of 143rd Street and Ridgeland Avenue. Possibly related to the sighting is a home that did in fact exist in that exact area but was removed many decades ago leaving very few [physical traces](#) of it for the group to discover.

Authors will often speak of the classic tale that there are no records or any other evidence of a home ever being built anywhere near the cemetery. Contrary to popular legend, there are at least four homes, and other structures, that did in fact exist relatively close to the cemetery.

Among the evidence are maps from 1901 and 1904 which indicate that there were man-made structures next to the cemetery. It should be noted, although not considered extremely accurate in terms of distance, one of the maps also indicates a structure in the same area where the "shadow" is located in the 1951 aerial photograph.

As far back as 1977, through a radio broadcast in Chicago, Richard Crowe had stated that there was physical evidence of houses that once existed near the cemetery that he witnessed first-hand. How the tale of no evidence existing of a house continued to be published as fact after this time period is partially left to speculation.

It is likely that comments from Crowe, such as within Brad Steiger's 1976 book *Psychic City Chicago*, had created more solid material for future authors to reference. On page 88 it states, "old records show that there never has been a house there." It is from this same book that the earliest verifiable reference to the classic tale of people not returning from the house if they enter it is found. Although Crowe stated "Perhaps those who do never return to tell about it" he added that no one has ever claimed to have entered it.

Over the years quite a number of authors give general reference to the story of no one ever returning from the house. Today, you will often find that most authors now leave out the story of no evidence existing of a house. This is likely due to the fact that many people are visiting the foundations to the old homes both east and west of the cemetery, which has also gained a fair amount of popularity when visiting the area.

According to research by Crowe, the disappearing house was witnessed more frequently in the mid 1970s than the blue light phenomenon. Reports of the disappearing house continue to the present day but the majority of them are lacking any specific details and the volume of reports are few and far between.

Although Crowe had stated in a 2011 interview that reports of paranormal activity were "first put into print" during the 1970s, he also mentioned that the stories were spoken of orally prior to that time period. Current research efforts into recovering newspaper articles to substantiate the claims dating to 1963 have not been successful. There is, however, testimony from multiple sources to support that newspaper articles do exist and the research continues.

There has been some confusion about the story of a "Magic House" while speaking with visitors at the cemetery. The origin of the phrase Magic House can be traced back to the 1985 book *Haunted Heartland* by Beth Scott and Michael Norman. Its use resurfaced in 1999 within the book *Chicago Haunts* by Ursula Bielski, and again in 2003 by the same author within the book *Creepy Chicago*, which also appears to be the reason why it is often mentioned in more modern times.

What separates the descriptions in *Creepy Chicago* from that of *Haunted Heartland* is that on page 4 of *Haunted Heartland* it states, "A 'Magic House' occasionally appears in a shroud-like mist" as well as "The house floats into view only rarely." Although there is no mention of a "mist" or the house "floating" in *Creepy Chicago*, there is a vague reference to the phrase "floating house" in *Chicago Haunts*. It is obvious, however, that all three books use the phrase Magic House in relation to the disappearing house. Still, the phrase causes some confusion as to what it means. Overall, the modern-day description of a "floating house" may have more to do with the idea that the house is reported in different locations around the cemetery.

## **Farmer and Horse**

(Also known as the Two-Headed Monster)

Last updated January 25, 2023

The following was written by Pete Crapia, founder of the Bachelors Grove Cemetery & Settlement Research Center. A great appreciation goes out to all of those that have and continue to contribute to the research efforts!

The origin of the legend of the farmer and horse can be traced back to researcher Dale Kaczmarek, President of the Ghost Research Society in Oak Lawn, Illinois. The sighting was first printed within the first edition of the 1982 Ghost Research Society Ghost Trackers Newsletter, as well as televised during a 1982 NBC 5 Chicago broadcast in which Kaczmarek was a guest.

Legend states that in the 1870s a farmer and his horse were plowing land when, for some unknown reason, the horse ran into the pond adjacent to the cemetery pulling in both the farmer and plow resulting in their death. The usual theory is that the horse was startled, which in turn caused the calamity. Apparently there were no witnesses around during the incident so it is uncertain as to what truly happened. It is often said that a combination of the weight of the plow and the farmer not knowing how to swim is what led to his death.

During the late 1970s Dale Kaczmarek interviewed a couple of Cook County Forest Preserve officers, also referred to as forest rangers at the time, whom both claim to have witnessed an apparition of a farmer with a horse and plow crossing 143rd street.

As the officers were driving east on 143rd Street late at night the apparition came from out of the pond heading north, crossed 143rd Street while rapidly passing in front of their headlights, and disappeared into what is now called the Rubio Woods Forest Preserve. Within the 1989 book True Tales of the Unknown: The Uninvited it mentions that they watched the apparition disappear from view as they approached the Midlothian Turnpike.

In the 2005 book Ghost Hunting Illinois, however, it mentions that the officers stopped their car to watch the event unfold. It is said that the officers did not file an official report out of fear of ridicule so the only information to rely on is the testimony of Dale Kaczmarek, who also happens to be a contributor to the 1989 book True Tales of the Unknown: The Uninvited.

As referenced earlier, the 1989 book True Tales of the Unknown: The Uninvited mentions that the apparition came from out of the pond. Found within the 2000 book Windy City Ghosts Kaczmarek states, "As they began to approach the lagoon, they saw what appeared to be a farmer and his horse pulling an old-fashioned plow suddenly materialized in the middle of the road and quickly disappeared into nearby Rubio Woods."



## Bachelors Grove Cemetery & Settlement Research Center

As a result of the interview with the officers, Kaczmarek recalled a time during his historical research that there was an incident of a farmer and horse drowning in the pond. On page 86 of the 2000 book *Windy City Ghosts* Kaczmarek states, "Later research indicated that in the 1870s, a farmer and his horse did in fact drown in the lagoon while clearing some land for crops."

For the sake of clarity, although it mentions a confusing statement of "later research", an interview of Kaczmarek conducted in 2009 indicates that he had prior knowledge of the 1870s incident before interviewing the Cook County Forest Preserve officers. The 1870s documentation, however, was unable to be recovered in order to verify if the incident had taken place at Bachelors Grove cemetery or elsewhere. The material is said to be misplaced at this point in time.

Based upon legal documentation, there are [indications](#) that the 1870s drowning could not have been possible since the rock quarry itself did not start until after 1900. During the time period in which it was dug out a portion of 143rd Street did not exist yet. The majority of any water collected in the quarry would have been removed through the use of drainage which ran directly north across the entire section of what would later become 143rd Street.

Remnants of the quarry drainage can still be witnessed on the north side of 143rd Street. That particular section of 143rd Street would have been built around the same time period of the first bridge which is dated as 1931. It would be after, or just shortly before this construction, that any significant water would begin to fill the hole and create a pond.

Some question why a farmer would be plowing near the pond at all, let alone for crops, but there are a variety of valid reasons for plowing in general. Visitors to the cemetery often mention that it would have been nearly impossible to see an object emerge from the water at night from the road.

Upon inspection of a scenic [photograph](#) from 1979, which happens to be from the same time period, it shows that the height of the road from the pond was around five feet high. Today, the height is only a little greater due to roadway developments, though vegetation growth in the past may have made it much more difficult to view compared to today. Since there is no reference point to the time of year in which the sighting took place, such as Fall or Spring, it can not yet be determined if the vegetation had any significant impact.



Time Period Road View Comparison

Years later within the 2004 book *Haunted Cemeteries*, information surfaced that the horse simply got too close to the water and fell in. Today, you will find people referring to comments from this book in the sense that the horse was not scared but simply tripped and fell in. As previously noted, a pond did not exist next to the cemetery until some time after 1900.

Found within a 2009 report, while driving on the Midlothian Turnpike some time in the early 1990s, Laurie Lambert of Illinois stated "a man driving a horse-drawn cart pulled out in front of me. I slowed down immediately, he went a few feet ahead and turned off the road." She was later surprised to hear of the horse and plow sighting from a speech given by Dale Kaczmarek.

Often attached to the legend of the farmer and horse is the report of a two-headed monster. The earliest written reference thus far to the two-headed monster comes from the 1985 book *Real Ghosts: Don't Wear Sheets* by Don Farrant. On page 61 it states, "and people claim to have seen a two-headed monster crawl from the water up onto the bank. But sometimes, say passing motorists, they have seen a murky monster going back into the waters...and disappearing!"

Confusingly, within the 2000 book *Windy City Ghosts*, it mentions that the legend of the two-headed monster has been circulating since the 1960s. No other information has been found referencing that specific time period. Researcher Richard Crowe of Illinois did state in a 2011 interview that the legend of the two-headed monster was fairly new in comparison to the disappearing house and blue light legends, though he does express his own doubt on the horse and plow sighting.

Dale Kaczmarek stated during a 1982 NBC 5 Chicago television broadcast that "what people are even saying is a two-headed monster, which, supposedly crawls out of the lagoon and across the 143rd Street." which may indicate that he has his own reservations to the

two-headed legend in particular. Then on page 86 of the 2000 book *Windy City Ghosts* Kaczmarek stated, "Surely no one believes in a two-headed monster?"

There is a theory that some of the two-headed sightings may have been mistaken for the apparition of the farmer and his horse, hence the reason why both legends are seen as one and the same. It is also speculated that reports of a "black carriage being drawn across the lagoon" could simply be a part of the farmer and horse apparition as well.

Another theory as to the origin of the two-headed monster can be found within the 2000 book *The International Directory of Haunted Places*. On page 179 it states, "during the late 1920s, the site was a favorite dumping ground for victims of Chicago mobsters. Perhaps the unique phantom is a remnant of those violent times."

During an interview with Richard Crowe in 2011 he stated, "I know for a fact how the story started," He then goes on to mention that the story of the two-headed monster dates back to the 1970s. It is said to have come from the sighting of a grotesque two-headed feature within a window of a mental institution in the Chicago area. At some point details were altered and the story found itself attached to Bachelors Grove cemetery. Once in a while you will find people joking around that a two-headed man was hidden away by his family and now comes back to haunt the area. Such a tale can be found on page 103 of the 2000 book *Ghost Stories of Illinois*.

The origin of the story comes from the 1998 book *The Field Guide to North American Hauntings* by W. Haden Blackman. On page 72 it states, "The grotesque creature wanders between the headstones, often accompanied by a legion of small, dancing blue lights." The author also goes on to state, "His identity is unknown, but he may be the spirit of a deformed man who was kept hidden from society by his parents and secretly buried at the site upon his death."

One of the earliest reports of a two-headed monster is mentioned in the 1989 book *True Tales of the Unknown: The Uninvited*. It tells of an elderly couple driving west late at night on the Midlothian Turnpike. When they approached the pond next to the cemetery, which happens to become 143rd Street at a certain point on its own, they both witnessed movement near the bridge that crosses the creek next to the pond. Shortly after, they each witnessed a "two-headed man" approach from under the south side of the bridge, cross in front of their headlights, and head north into what is now called the Rubio Woods Forest Preserve. They then proceeded to drive faster and left the area.

Over a decade later within the 2003 book *Voices from the Chicago Grave* by Scott Markus, it mentions a man by the name of Adam R. Rotsch. On page 98 Markus speaks of Rotsch as "startled to see what appeared to be a disfigured man walking over the pond." The man is described as having a large bulge protruding from his shoulder. Markus also stated, "While some assumed it was another head, Adam merely thought the man had a hunchback." Rotsch is said to not have had any prior knowledge of stories of a two-headed man. Although his sighting occurred during the late 1990s, no specific details were given on the time of year or which section of the pond it was sighted at.

## **Madonna of Bachelors Grove**

(Also known as the White Lady, Mrs. Rogers and Woman In White)

Last updated October 16, 2020

The following was written by Pete Crapia, founder of the Bachelors Grove Cemetery & Settlement Research Center. A great appreciation goes out to all of those that have and continue to contribute to the research efforts!

The legend of the Madonna of Bachelors Grove dates back to 1982. Within the 2000 book *Beyond The Grave*, on page 224 it states, "photos taken by the group in 1979 show a monk-like figure standing near the cemetery fence. The figure appeared to be wearing a hooded robe and holding a baby in its arms" It then goes on to mention, "Oddly, this was three years before the Ghost Research Society collected any accounts of the White Lady!"

But the legend of the Madonna of Bachelors Grove can be very confusing. Original definition to the phrases Madonna of Bachelors Grove and White Lady are given to the apparition of a woman in a white dress that is reported as wandering aimlessly throughout the cemetery, while occasionally holding a baby in her arms. The most popular aspect to the legend is that you can only see the woman and baby together on moonlit nights, specifically when there is a full moon. Based upon the widespread use of the phrases in books and elsewhere, it is from these particular sightings that the phrases hold most of their historical meaning.

The origin of the legend can be traced back to researcher Dale Kaczmarek, President of the Ghost Research Society in Oak Lawn, Illinois. The first source that mentions the phrases White Lady and Madonna of Bachelors Grove together is the 1989 book *True Tales of the Unknown: The Uninvited* by Sharon Jarvis. Within the book it is clear that the phrases White Lady and Madonna of Bachelors Grove are both attached to the same apparition of a woman and baby. Kaczmarek happened to be a contributor to the book as well.

One particular reference from 1998 within *The Republican* states, "There were several reports of a figure of a young girl near one of the graves," During an interview of Kaczmarek for the *Lombardian* in October of 2000 the author stated, "A woman in white, with a baby in her arms, was also reported by local officers, and at first they never repeated the story of their sighting" She also went on to quote Kaczmarek as saying, "they thought they'd be laughed at by their friends and colleagues,"

Even though witnesses have reported the White Lady as a woman in a white dress walking throughout the cemetery, it has also been reported without a baby in her arms. Removing the baby from the sightings occasionally leads to confusion where the legend evolves into the White Lady occasionally "looking" for her missing baby as she still appears to be walking aimlessly throughout the cemetery.

Authors have interchanged various phrases used to describe the apparition of the woman while speaking separately about different aspects to the legend. This appears to be the primary reason why some people are confused into thinking they are being told separate legends.

Confusion has even struck authors themselves. One example can be found within the 2000 book *Ghost Stories of Illinois*. On page 103 it states, "One of the most famous phantoms of Bachelor's Grove is known as the White Lady or the Madonna. Some locals have also dubbed her, for no apparent reason, Mrs. Rogers."

As found within the example just given, when speaking about the White Lady references to a Mrs. Rogers can be found. The first use of the phrase Mrs. Rogers can be traced back to the 1991 book *More Haunted Houses* by Joan Bingham and Dolores Riccio.

Within the book legend states, "There's an urgency in her manner as she wanders about searching through the tombstones for a lost treasure or person." The legend continues that the apparition is thought to be the spirit of a woman that was buried next to her infant. At this point the legend of the White Lady evolves into that of Mrs. Rogers which is still in reference to the Madonna of Bachelors Grove.

Within the 1989 book *True Tales of the Unknown: The Uninvited*, in reference to the White Lady and baby found on page 62, Dale Kaczmarek states, "To add a little fuel to the fire, there is a very small grave in Bachelor's Grove with the simple inscription 'Infant Daughter.' Makes you wonder, doesn't it?" At no point in the book does it make any reference to a woman looking for a treasure or person, nor does it mention that the woman is looking for a baby.

Within the *National Examiner* in 1984 Kaczmarek had stated, "Except for the baby, the descriptions are always the same --- a mournful white-clad phantom wandering aimlessly among the tombstones." The author of the article then goes on to mention, "Kaczmarek believes the tormented phantom is desperately seeking other children in her family who were somehow lost to her." It was not until the 1991 book *More Haunted Houses* was published that information was more widely available as to the speculation of the White Lady looking for her infant.

There was at least some correspondence between Kaczmarek and the authors of *More Haunted Houses* before it was published. How much of that conversation found its way into the book may be irrelevant, but the important factor is that the phrase Mrs. Rogers was an outcome.

The name Mrs. Rogers is actually in reference to Luella Rogers who is buried in lot 15 next to the "Infant Daughter" headstone. Burial records indicate that the Infant Daughter headstone is located on a plot that lies next to Luella Rogers and Daniel Rogers. It was not until 1995 when Brad Bettenhausen, President of the Tinley Park Historical Society in Illinois, made additional genealogy information available through a *Where The Trails Cross* publication that incidentally gave some insight into a portion of the facts surrounding the Mrs. Rogers legend.



Contrary to popular legend, the Infant Daughter burial is not a child of Luella Rogers, or Daniel Rogers, all of whom are buried next to each other on the same lot. There is genealogical evidence to support that the Infant Daughter headstone was actually a replacement headstone for Emma Fulton after it went missing.

Evidence indicates that the Infant Daughter headstone should have been placed on the east side of the Fulton family monument, not on the west side where it was cemented into the ground upon its "replacement." So that would make the burial site of the Infant Daughter headstone belonging to Marcia May, daughter of Bertrand Fulton and Kathryn Vogt. Overall, regardless of which person is actually located within the burial site of Infant Daughter we now know that the child does not belong to Luella Rogers.

Usage of the phrase Mrs. Rogers continues to be printed in books, newspapers and other publications. Various theories are given on its meaning throughout the Internet, some of which may or may not have any relevance to factual information. But the theories themselves have the potential to spawn a new era of legends surrounding the White Lady. Only time will tell if they will have any historical relevance to local legend such as usage of the phrase Woman In White.

The legend of the White Lady becomes more clouded by references to multiple reports of a humanoid-type apparition. A prime example is the case of the famous [photograph](#) captured in 1991 by Jude Felz, former member of the Ghost Research Society in Oak Lawn, Illinois. The image is reported as capturing an apparition of a woman sitting on the base of a headstone during daylight utilizing black and white infrared film.

One sentence from 1998 within The Republican newspaper states, "There were several reports of a figure of a young girl near one of the graves, but Kaczmarek had to see it to believe it." In reference to tours being given at the time it also went on to state, "He showed the amazed audience a [picture](#) of a transparent woman sitting on a tombstone." Presentation of the photograph in this manner is the primary reason why it became associated with the legend of the Madonna of Bachelors Grove.

Bachelors Grove Cemetery & Settlement Research Center



Captured by Jude Huff - August 10, 1991 - Courtesy of Kevin Watson

## **Phantom Dog**

Last updated October 11, 2011

The following was written by Pete Crapia, founder of the Bachelors Grove Cemetery & Settlement Research Center. A great appreciation goes out to all of those that have and continue to contribute to the research efforts!

The legend of the Phantom Dog can be traced as far back as the late 1980s. The first sighting is said to have occurred while two young men were visiting the cemetery. As one of them was walking around inside he witnessed strange flickering lights within the flora. According to the witness, he could not find an explanation for the lights and that there was no object in the area that could have caused a reflection of some sort. Upon turning around, he then witnessed the backside of a black dog and it faded away into what is being described as "nothingness."

The first written record of the above sighting can be found within the 1989 book *True Tales of the Unknown: The Uninvited*. Nearly a decade later within the 1999 book *Haunted Illinois* by Troy Taylor, it states that around 1998 Taylor had received several reports of "some sort of supernatural animal along the road to Bachelor's Grove." He also went on to state that all of the witnesses "claims to have seen a very large, black dog near the entrance to the road. This dog always vanishes when approached, normally right before the eyes of the witness."

In June of 1998 a black dog was witnessed walking out of the roped entrance to the path leading to the cemetery off of 143rd Street. Of the two people in the report, only one of them was able to see the dog despite "being able to see it perfectly clear in the nearby light of the street lamp." Upon a second trip to the cemetery one week later, the same person who was able to see the dog was visiting the area with a group of friends when he saw the same dog in the same location. During this particular sighting two out of five people were able to see it. Without any movement, before the dog "faded little by little until it was completely gone" it looked to them as possibly being a black Doberman.

Found within the 2003 book *Voices from the Chicago Grave* by Scott Markus, in reference to phantom dogs on page 100 the author states, "Bob Jensen was one such witness who had no knowledge of the phantom animals until he encountered one on the path near the cemetery entrance." There was no description of the dog itself, date and time of the sighting, or any other information.

During the Summer of 2003 a first-hand report was made describing a small group of boys witnessing a dog come from behind a tree and running toward them. Out of fear, the boys rode their bicycles out of the cemetery and as they looked back they found that the dog had disappeared. There was no description given to the size, color or breed of dog.

Afterwards, within the 2006 book *A Field Guide to Chicago Hauntings* by Jim Graczyk, it gives a description of a black and tan rottweiler that can be seen on the trail that leads to the cemetery and that it simply watches and never barks.

Author Jim Graczyk then goes on to reveal his own encounters with a phantom dog in the late 1980s within his 2008 book *Chicago Hauntings for Teens*. He describes a black and brown rottweiler that came out of the woods as they exited the cemetery and it proceeded to follow him and his associates along the main path that leads to the cemetery.

During a 2009 interview with Graczyk, he described walking down the path toward the Rubio Woods parking lot as the dog kept pace with him and the others he was visiting with. Everyone became concerned and made a pact to defend each other against the dog. He mentioned that the dog looked very real and that they all found it strange that it never barked nor growled.

After exiting the roped entrance to the main path off of 143rd Street, the dog continued to follow them and stopped near the concrete curb. It continued to watch them as they crossed 143rd Street and once making it back to the car Graczyk turned around to find that the dog had disappeared. Graczyk stated that he did not know the story of the Phantom Dog and strongly believes that the dog he witnessed was one and the same. For the sake of clarity, it should be noted that the reference of "tan" and "brown" in the separate color descriptions are supposed to represent the same thing.

## Red Light

Last Updated June 02, 2022

The following was written by Pete Crapia, founder of the Bachelors Grove Cemetery & Settlement Research Center. A great appreciation goes out to all of those that have and continue to contribute to the research efforts!

Reports of a red light date back as far as 1984. The first known sighting comes from an overnight investigation of the cemetery conducted by researcher Norman Basile of Illinois. The earliest written record can be found within a 1984 Chicago Sun-Times newspaper article where Basile is quoted as saying, "I've seen streaking red lights." which is in reference to the sighting of a yellow humanoid apparition.

During the Summer of 1984, at 10:00 P.M. Basile and one of his associates were attempting an overnight "camping" excursion within the cemetery. A few hours after their arrival his associate witnessed a yellow apparition near some trees. A moment later they both witnessed "red streaking lights, and watched in disbelief as a single tree began to shake frantically." Out of fear, his associate gathered their equipment and they both immediately left the area.

Through the assistance of researcher Dale Kaczmarek, President of the Ghost Research Society in Oak Lawn, Illinois, details of the yellow man sighting found its way into the 1989 book True Tales of the Unknown: The Uninvited by Sharon Jarvis.

Also within the book is the origin to the story of red lights that have been witnessed on the main path south of the cemetery, which was a portion of the Midlothian Turnpike at one time. On page 59 it goes on to describe a "phantom red rocket" that moves up and down the path as it leaves a "red trail in its wake." The light, which is also described as "fiery red", has been witnessed moving rapidly down the trail where it would stop, hover, and head back in the same direction from where it started while repeating the same pattern of movements. It is said that at first the red lights were thought to have been the prank of teenagers using Roman candles or bottle rockets. The repeating characteristics of the light, however, indicates that a prank using fireworks was not possible.

The 1998 book The Field Guide to North American Hauntings by W. Haden Blackman mentions the sighting of the yellow apparition as well. On page 72 it states, "One of these floating orbs took the shape of a yellow phantom. Seconds later, the ghost dissipated in an explosion of shooting red lights." This reference to the sighting, however, has been found to be misleading and partially false. The original report never indicated any "orbs" nor did it specifically describe an "explosion" of red lights at the exact moment the apparition disappeared. For further details the legend of the [Yellow Man](#) should be consulted.

Within the 1999 book Haunted Illinois by Troy Taylor. On page 261 it states, "One such light that has been reported numerous times is a red beacon-like object that has been seen rapidly flying

up and down the trail to the cemetery." The referenced light is in relation to the same material written about by Dale Kaczmarek in 1989 but the description of "beacon-like" deviates from the original report and can be misleading. The statement was then reprinted within the 2000 book *Beyond the Grave* by the same author.

Found within the 2003 book *Voices from the Chicago Grave* by Scott Markus, it states that in the late 1990s Adam R. Rotsch "said that red lights were flashing throughout the cemetery in a way that it looked like they were 'dancing' with the green light periodically given off by fireflies." This sighting indicates that the red lights were not on the path south of the cemetery, hence it has no relationship to the "beacon-like" reference given by Troy Taylor in 1999 and 2000.

Author Cameron Banks stated within his 2004 book *Ghostly Graveyards and Spooky Spots* that "glowing balls that float through the air appear in many different sizes and in color such as blue, red, orange, and white." Such a sighting is found within an undated report given by Katey (private). She stated, "I have seen a red ball of light in the cemetery before. It was at least six feet off of the ground and floated around."

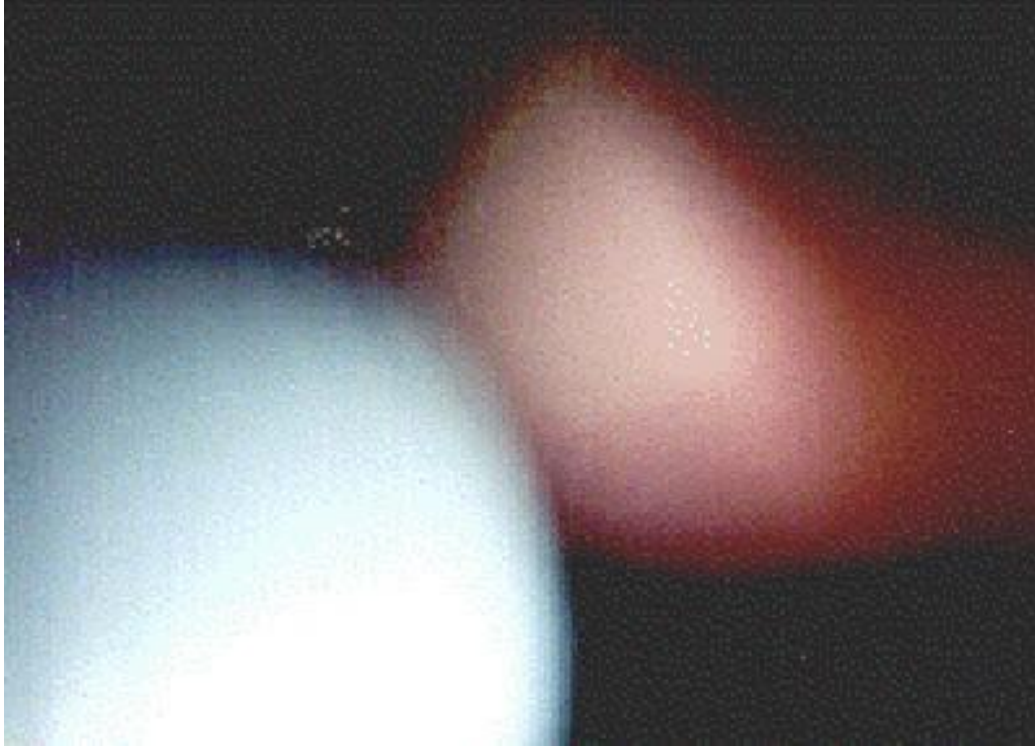
A multiple red light sighting is also included within a separate undated report by John Sobieck of Illinois. Sobieck stated that at approximately 12:00 A.M. he and his brother witnessed a few deer exiting a hole in the cemetery gate near the pond. A few seconds later he "noticed two green globes float across the graveyard." He also went on to state that his brother "says they were red, and it is a debate amongst us, but then again I have never heard of green globes in any ghost reports."

During an interview conducted in 2022, Larry Borkstrom of Illinois [recalled his first time](#) visiting Bachelors Grove cemetery in the Spring of 1986. Toward the end of his visit just before sunset, two balls of light appeared one foot above the ground and five feet in front of him while walking inside the cemetery. They initially glowed a mixture of white and blue and proceeded to slowly move toward the south side entrance. As they traveled toward the entrance both lights shifted to the color red. Three teenagers standing outside the entrance watched in silence as the lights "danced" around them. During this two to three minute encounter the lights alternated in a blue and red fashion. As the lights headed back toward Borkstrom they returned to a white and blue color. When the teenagers proceeded to enter the cemetery both lights returned back to the entrance in a "solid red" color. The teenagers ran away and as Borkstrom approached the entrance the lights simply faded from view. At no point did the lights leave the fenced perimeter of the cemetery.

Possibly related to the 1986 description reported by Larry Borkstrom is a photograph of a white and blue light, which also includes a white and red light leaving a tail of red behind it. Borkstrom was asked if the photograph resembled the blue and red lights he witnessed in which he replied "close, but it was years ago, I'd say almost." At one time this particular [photograph](#) shown to him was released by Stacy McArdle at her now defunct website of [hauntedpages.com](#). It is unclear as to the exact date it was captured, possibly in the very late 1990s, but it was labeled as capturing both a blue and red source of light within the cemetery. McArdle is known for



identifying an unrelated hoaxed paranormal [photograph](#) of Bachelors Grove cemetery and convincing the perpetrator into admitting it. Based upon this statement of credibility it is up to the reader to decide if this photograph represents the same, or alternative, red light reported by eyewitnesses.



White/Blue and White/Red Lights - Courtesy of Stacy McArdle

During May of 2022 a photographer visiting the cemetery [recalled details](#) of a red light encounter. Some time during 2017 or 2018, at approximately 1 or 2 A.M., Dan (private) experienced a red light outside the fenced perimeter of the cemetery. He initially witnessed the light in the southeast area of the woods adjacent to the cemetery. During the half minute encounter, it slowly traveled west as it faded in and out of view and eventually moved back and forth over a fairly wide area. Dan attempted to tell his friend about it who was standing in the northwest area of the cemetery, but after turning back the light was gone.

## The Hook

(Also known as the Hooked Maniac, Hooked Spirit and Psychiatric Patient)

Last updated September 26, 2011

The following was written by Pete Crapia, founder of the Bachelors Grove Cemetery & Settlement Research Center. A great appreciation goes out to all of those that have and continue to contribute to the research efforts!

The legend of The Hook has been a part of Bachelors Grove lore since as far back as the 1970s, and possibly into the 1940s as well. During the 1970s researcher Richard Crowe of Illinois spoke of the legend while as a guest on widespread radio broadcasts. It is also briefly mentioned in his 1985 documentary The Ghosts of Chicago. Although the legend of The Hook has been found to be an Urban Legend, that did not prevent it from becoming a popular story with visitors to Bachelors Grove cemetery.

The path outside the main entrance to the cemetery used to be a part of the Midlothian Turnpike. For a while the road was also used as a Lover's Lane until being closed to vehicle traffic in the 1960s. Due to its use as a Lover's Lane it should probably be of no surprise that the legend made its way to the area.

Since the story of The Hook is an Urban Legend, what naturally followed were variations of it, something which has occurred with other locations that have adopted the legend.

Within the 1989 book True Tales of the Unknown: The Uninvited, it speaks of the "Hooked Spirit" as someone that would sneak up on parked vehicles. On page 52 it states, "He is sometimes reported to be carrying a double-barreled shotgun and chase lovers from the property which once belonged to him." That same passage can also be found to coincide with variations to the legend of the [Caretaker](#) for Bachelors Grove cemetery.

Attached to the legend is the story of a young man who parks out at the cemetery with his girlfriend. It is said that in order to persuade his girlfriend to seek protection in his arms for romantic reasons he tells her the story of The Hook. The plan backfires and she asks to be driven home instead. After arriving at her house the boyfriend opens the car door for his girlfriend. While attempting to open the door he finds a hook swinging on the door handle. They apparently ripped it from his arm upon leaving, nearly surviving an attack from "The Hook."

As part of the Urban Legend to The hook, you will also find versions that reference a patient that has escaped from a nearby hospital. With it comes different variations and Bachelors Grove cemetery has its own as well. It is said that while a young couple was parked out at the cemetery, during the middle of their "necking" they were interrupted by a report on the radio. It stated that a mass murderer escaped from a nearby psychiatric hospital and he was last seen heading in their direction.

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The woman becomes frightened and demands to be driven home. As fate would have it, the car is unable to be started so the man tells her that he will go and find help. He then instructs her to lock the doors and windows and walks off to find a service station. While he is away for quite some time she also hears a strange scratching sound coming from the roof of the car. She ignores the sounds as if they are just branches from a nearby tree.

Eventually a police car pulls up with its colored lights on. Relieved, she opens the door to step out and greet them. The officer orders her to walk toward him and to not look back at the car under any circumstances. The young woman's curiosity gets the best of her and she turns around to look. There, hanging upside down from a tree, is her boyfriend with his throat cut from ear to ear. His fingernails are said to be the source of the scratching sound.

During a 1977 radio broadcast in Chicago, Richard Crowe mentioned that the Lover's Lane story of the man hung upside down goes back to the 1940s. It was not clearly stated if the legend truly applies to Bachelors Grove cemetery that long ago, but there is some sort of indication which suggests that it may have.

In an interview for the Southtown Economist in 1980 Crowe stated, "The tales about Bachelor's Grove date from at least World War II," he also went on to state, "It is one of these popular folk areas that were spread around the high school circuit." While on the radio in 1977 there was mention of a "friend at Cook County" that was going to supply Crowe with a file which was supposed to indicate that the "man hung upside down" had in fact taken place at the cemetery, but the file was never received. It should be noted that during an interview with Crowe in 2011, when questioned about the file he did not appear to be very interested and even chuckled, suggesting he had little belief that any sort of incident took place at Bachelors Grove cemetery.

## **Yellow Man**

Last Updated October 17, 2011

The following was written by Pete Crapia, founder of the Bachelors Grove Cemetery & Settlement Research Center. A great appreciation goes out to all of those that have and continue to contribute to the research efforts!

The origin of the legend of the Yellow Man can be traced back to researcher Norman Basile of Illinois. The earliest written record of the sighting can be found within an October of 1984 Chicago Sun-Times newspaper article where Basile is quoted as saying, "A month and a half ago, I saw an apparition standing by a tree. It was a yellow figure, a man with a hat, probably in his 40s," The author of the article added, "he took a picture of the image on 1000-speed film." Through the assistance of researcher Dale Kaczmarek, President of the Ghost Research Society In Oak Lawn, Illinois, further details of the sighting found its way into the 1989 book True Tales of the Unknown: The Uninvited by Sharon Jarvis.

During the Summer of 1984, at 10:00 P.M. Basile and one of his associates were attempting an overnight "camping" excursion within the cemetery. A few hours after their arrival, while both were standing back-to-back to each other, his associate stated, "Oh, my God! Look what's standing over there by the trees!" By the time Basile turned around it was too late, the apparition had disappeared. His associate described a man in his forties, all in yellow, wearing a suit and hat. A moment later they both witnessed "red streaking lights, and watched in disbelief as a single tree began to shake frantically." Out of fear, his associate gathered their equipment and they both immediately left the area.

There was no mention of any photograph captured of the event, nor did Basile get a chance to see the apparition as it was stated within the 1984 newspaper article. Unfortunately, Norman Basile is currently unavailable for a full interview but further attempts are being made to locate him. In the meantime, it should be noted that Basile and Kaczmarek were in communication with each other during the 1980s, hence how the story found its way into the 1989 book. Since newspaper reporters have a tendency to make mistakes, and no further interviews can be conducted with Basile at this time, Kaczmarek is considered to be a more reliable source of information.

Further details of the sighting were then printed within the 1991 book More Haunted Houses by Joan Bingham and Dolores Riccio. On page 143 it describes Basile's associate as a skeptic of "psychic phenomena" but agreed to come along in order to help carry camera equipment and microphones. By midnight he was "feeling quite smug and a bit sorry for Basile" due to nothing unusual occurring. That is when the apparition was sighted. Upon each of them reflecting on what the figure could have been, "red streaks of light started darting around the cemetery. Then one tree started to shake violently." It should be noted that there was at least some correspondence between Kaczmarek and the authors of More Haunted Houses before it was published.

Found within a 1996 report, a woman by the name of Heather had stated, "I was starting to get bored with being there. Then it happened, I saw a man there dressed in yellow. I told my dad and he didn't see anything, neither did my friend. I couldn't help but stare at it, it wasn't a solid form but more translucent in shape, although I did see it. I can't explain exactly what happened next, but I remember leaving the cemetery with my dad and friend. Then all of a sudden, I felt something cold rush past me. I started to run, I didn't care, I wanted out of there, I had enough." There was no mention as to the exact year in which the events took place.

In 2001 author Scott Markus of Illinois was conducting interviews for a documentary about haunted locations around Illinois, he had also requested assistance from the Grove Restoration Project for information about Bachelors Grove cemetery. During the same day of an on-site interview, information was divulged to Markus about a vague story of a yellow colored apparition as well as the sighting of a yellow figure which occurred during 1998. A request was made in regard to the 1998 sighting that it not be divulged to the public out of personal interest.

In 2003 the efforts of the documentary were instead turned into a book which became known as *Voices from the Chicago Grave*. On pages 99 and 100 it states, "one of the seldomly-reported phantoms is a man in a suit who gives off a modest yellow glow." Despite the request for privacy, it then goes on to state, "Pete Crapia, who also organizes the Grove Restoration Project at [www.bachelorsgrove.com](http://www.bachelorsgrove.com), can vouch for the validity of this tale." Markus added, "Pete saw something out of the corner of his eye. Looking at the developed picture revealed a yellow blur. Though Pete never saw the shape of a man, he can attest to an energy source of some sort that gives off a yellow glow." The description given by Markus, however, is misleading and not entirely accurate.

To help clear up the matter, what occurred on October 19, 1998 was a casual visit made to the cemetery to capture scenic photographs. Due to the expense of developing 35mm film, one of the first 'economical' digital cameras on the market at that time was purchased and tested. Upon capturing a view of the Fulton monument, at the very moment the button was to be pushed, the image of a tall yellow humanoid figure was briefly witnessed with the human eye which was also within view of the camera lens.

After the photograph was captured it was obvious that the playback image on the LCD screen had a discrepancy when compared to the standard surroundings. In the exact same location where the apparition was sighted, the image did show a yellow area where there was no other object(s) resembling yellow. There also appears to be what looks like a human torso with a pair of legs below it?

Possibly due to the distraction of capturing a photograph at that time, there was no indication of any facial features, suit or hat with the human eye. In addition, it was not until about a year later that any story was read in regards to a yellow apparition appearing at the cemetery. Discovering the story was a shock to say the least and induced more serious consideration to the legends attached to Bachelors Grove cemetery.

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Although the image may have some research value for more serious paranormal investigators due to the human eye confirmation factor, it was never considered necessary to reveal it to the general public due to the low resolution caused by the quality of digital cameras at that time. It would only have been dismissed as "something else" and would not have served much purpose.

In the interest of full disclosure on the matter the [photograph](#) may now be viewed for the first time in its original unaltered 320x240 format. The [alternative](#) version has a circular notation to help as a guide. In response to the 2003 book, and in preparation of full disclosure to the story, you may come across a YouTube video where a comment had been made about the sighting. For those seeking more technical details on the photograph please note that the majority of digital cameras at that time did not include features such as EXIF data.



320 X 240 'Polaroid' Digital Photograph

Found within a 2011 Examiner.com article by Patricia Marin is a [photograph](#) that was captured in close proximity to the sighting just mentioned. During April of 2009, at approximately 10:30



P.M., Nina Jankowski of the Chicago Ghost Hunters Group in Illinois photographed an orange-yellow light next to the Fulton monument.



Nina Jankowski - April 2009

The author of the article had stated, "According to Nina, she was standing by the tombstone of Charles B. Shields in Lot 17 looking east when she started to feel somewhat light-headed. Out of the corner of her eye, she saw something that looked like a shadow person run past her. That's when she snapped the photo and caught this anomaly." The article goes on to quote Jankowski as saying, "Once I started feeling dizzy, it was almost as though I was somehow surrounded and being guided to take this photo. When I grabbed my digital camera, I noticed that it was turning on/off by itself and it was on a different setting than the one I had chosen earlier."